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UNCLAS

SITUATION REPORT

POLAND

Solidarity's success in making its work boycott last Saturday larger than the one on 10 January may make a quick compromise with the government more difficult.

Both sides will evaluate Saturday's events and thrash out their negotiating strategies at meetings early this week. Party leader Kania will chair a session of provincial party leaders tomorrow. Solidarity's National Coordinating Commission will begin a two-day meeting in Gdansk on Wednesday to discuss the situation and select delegates to negotiate with the government.

Although the regime probably realizes the need to reach an accommodation with the union, it may be even more determined that any compromise allow it to save face. Some within Solidarity, fresh from what they feel was an overwhelming victory, may prove to be even more stubborn than before. Others, however, may feel they have demonstrated their power and that the union should move to resolve this issue.

The government is trying to play down the political significance of Saturday's boycott and is seeking to pressure Solidarity toward moderation by claiming that neither side won--that only Poland was the loser. In line with earlier efforts to cast Solidarity as the villain, the Polish media are making little effort to conceal the breadth of the boycott and the consequent economic costs. Such candid admissions could provide arguments for hardliners' assertions that the situation is getting out of control and may be intended to put pressure on Solidarity.

The atmosphere for negotiations may not improve soon. Solidarity last week declared this Wednesday a day of unity, with farmers demanding their own independent union. Several local chapters have already scheduled

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strikes. [REDACTED] claims that Solidarity is threatening a nationwide "warning" strike on 3 February in support of farmers. [REDACTED]

One development that has the potential for helping to improve the atmosphere is the government's reported offer to debate the free Saturday issue with Solidarity leaders on nationwide television. Such a move would demonstrate the regime's willingness to discuss problems with the new union. Such a debate could raise future problems for the regime since Solidarity would probably seek regular and frequent access to the media, something the regime probably would not be willing to grant. [REDACTED]

Meanwhile, the student demonstration at the University of Lodz apparently is being conducted on behalf of the entire student body and faculty. The strike, according to a visiting professor, follows the rejection of 47 student demands including an end to courses on Marxism, military science, and Russian language. [REDACTED]

Soviet and East European Reaction

The Soviet media reaction has been slight. The few articles taking note of the work stoppage have emphasized the economic costs and have accused Solidarity of yielding to the pressure of its "rightwing, antisocialist" faction. [REDACTED]

Prague once again was out in front with its negative reporting of labor unrest in Poland. The Czechoslovak media, reporting on Saturday's boycott, highlighted that many workers stayed home and claimed that patrols of "young Solidarity members" prevented some people from working. [REDACTED]